



Bulletin 632

Parent Study/Discussion Group Facilitator's Manual



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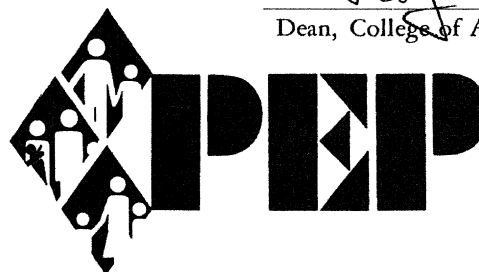
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CONTRACT FOR PEP STUDY/DISCUSSION GROUPS

- I understand that the facilitator of my study/discussion group is not and does not pretend to be an expert or authority in parent-child relations. The facilitator's job is to hand out assignments, call meetings to order at the specified time, encourage free and open discussion of principles studied, keep meetings moving by focusing attention on the topic being considered, invite all members to participate in the discussion, and close meetings at the agreed time. The facilitator, even though he or she may have been through a study/discussion program, should not be looked to by members for counseling on problems they may have with their children*
- I understand that this is my study/discussion group, that there is no expert present to give us all the answers. It will be stimulating, enjoyable and informative exactly in proportion to the interest, dedication and energy I contribute to it.*
- I understand that the expert in the group is the material that I read for each study/discussion group meeting. Therefore, when I or anyone in the group do not understand an idea, concept or theory we should reread the material first, and seek additional clarification by asking others what they believe and also seek outside resources.*
- I understand that the group facilitator will be looked upon as the guide for the flow of discussion, but I also understand members have equal responsibility for getting out of the program what they want. If one or two members engage in a struggle, argue, insist on dwelling on one of their own pet theories, then it's up to me to speak up and take the pressure off the facilitator.*
- I understand I am not expected to agree with or accept all of the ideas presented to me in this study/discussion program. What I accept or reject is up to me. When I find a point that I disagree with or do not understand, I will note it and bring it up at the next session. If, after short discussion, I am still not in agreement or unclear, I will postpone final judgment until later, and permit discussion to move on without arguing my point. I am participating to learn new ideas, not to dispute them.*
- I understand that assignments must be read in advance of meetings. This not only is essential if I am to get the most out of the program, it also is simple courtesy to other members who depend on me to know something about the subject to be covered. (If I expect my children to do their homework, then I have exactly the same obligation with my homework.)*
- I understand that punctual and regular attendance at study/discussion meetings is very important to my success in this program and that it is not fair to other members if I arrive late to some meetings and altogether miss others. Doing this breaks group continuity.*
- I understand that after several meetings, parents in study/discussion groups often become quite open in discussing problems in their own families. They grow trusting of the other group members, and expect fellow members not to divulge to others outside the group anything that is said in the group that is of a personal or confidential nature. I agree to honor this trust by not telling people outside the group anything.*
- I understand that I will be mistaken if I expect miracles or instant changes in relations with my children. When I learn a method new to me, I agree not to rush right home and try it, or seek to use it as just another gimmick for dominating my children. I will want to understand it before plunging in. I also will refrain from making a pest of myself by trying to counsel other parents on how they should go about raising their children. If my spouse does not accept ideas I have learned, I will resist trying to convert him or her through argument. Successful demonstration is the most convincing and effective form of persuasion.*

Date _____

Signed _____

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Part One

Giving Leadership to PEP

Why PEP

People are constantly exposed to education and training designed to help improve skills in their occupations, their use of leisure time, and most importantly in their state of living. Parents too need training in order to become effective parents. In the past, it was thought the only qualification needed for parenting was biological. Today a parent not only needs to be aware of the biological, but also the psychological, physical, and sociological aspects of the parent role.

For example, in the past 20 years our society has undergone a rapid social change. It is a time of social equality—when people refuse to be denied their freedom of expression, when they insist upon having their feelings or emotions accepted, when they need to learn to live with each other as equals and with their own feelings. Today, people refuse to be treated as inferior.

To a parent, the social revolution means a challenge most parents may not be prepared to meet, for the social revolution replaces the automatic philosophy of parenting with the democratic philosophy for raising children.

The traditional way of raising children—by reward and punishment—is not giving parents what they want most: responsible, self-confident children who grow up to be responsible, well-adjusted adults. To achieve this goal, new approaches to parent-child relationships are needed—approaches based on democratic principles.

What is the democratic process for parenting? In contrast to autocratic and/or permissive methods in which the parent is either enforcing or being submissive, the democratic process is based on **mutual respect, equality, freedom, and responsibility**.

The terms equality and freedom are often misunderstood. They are not used in the sense of equal attributes or the freedom to do whatever one wants. Instead, the terms apply to human worth, dignity and the recognition that if a society is to survive, it must have certain limits.

The democratic process assumes that:

- each person in a family is entitled to equal respect;
- a parent provides opportunities and experience within limits for children to make decisions within limits;
- a parent allows the child to be responsible for decisions.

Based on the works of Adler and Dreikurs, this type of parenting replaces reward and punishment with “natural and logical consequences” as a method for discipline.

Democratic parents don’t just happen, they become that way because they are willing to work at it, willing to try new ways and different skills in their parent-child relationships. Consequently, the purpose of this program is to help parents challenge and sometimes replace outmoded methods of parenting to meet better the challenges of raising children in the 21st century.

What is Parent Education?

Not a day goes by that parents aren’t exposed to advice—some solicited—on how to raise their child. Doctors advise and so do relatives, friends, neighbors, magazine writers, newspaper columnists, radio and TV commentators, and extension agents.

To help parents make sense out of this barrage of information, PEP —*Practical Education for Parenting* — was devised. PEP offers parents a practical approach to raising children.

PEP theory is intended to be used in a study/discussion group setting because research has found such groups are especially effective for parent education. Within a group, parents encourage each other to try new parenting roles and skills. Parents share common concerns and soon learn how to work out solutions to problems which at first seem uniquely their own. Through study/discussion groups, parents become aware of their own *actions, reactions, and attitudes* about parenting, children, and other parents. PEP’s goals are:

- To help parents understand and implement a practical parenting theory, to challenge existing attitudes and actions, and to increase competence in child-rearing skills;
- To help parents develop a democratic relationship with their children;
- To help parents improve problem solving, communication, coping, and management skills for effective child management;
- To help parents learn how to use encouragement and logical and natural consequences to modify their children’s self-defeating motives and behaviors;
- To help parents learn how to implement and conduct the family council;
- To help parents become aware of their own self-defeating patterns and faulty beliefs which keep them from becoming effective parents.

Two Schools of Thought on Parent Education

There are at least two schools of thought on how an adult can learn successfully the role of parenting, these are psychotherapeutic and educational, the first position, psychotherapy, holds that to solve the problems of parenthood, one needs only to become more mature, more adjusted, more wise, more patient. A parent may achieve emotional poise and maturity through various types of group guidance or individual counseling procedures. By achieving understanding of self, one becomes a more organized and effective parent.

The second point of view, educational, holds that one can approach the problems of parenthood just as one might approach problems of learning in math, social studies, or current affairs. A person may learn fundamental facts about children which have been determined by careful studies such as how children develop intellectually, how social groups form, how interests grow and are influenced, and how children learn at school. Experiences that appear to promote mental health are important in understanding the role of parenthood.

The proponents of the educational viewpoint recognize that while there are some problems which can be resolved only at an emotional level, it is profitable to study facts about children, to learn interpersonal as well as intrapersonal relationship skills, to learn to recognize differences in maturity among children and what these differences mean for interests, for learning, for play, and for many other childhood

stages of development and behavior. This position holds that parents can learn to understand and apply this knowledge and will gain insight into some of their problems through education.

Proponents of the educational viewpoint of parent education say that an intelligent study of child development need not awaken worries in parents. Parent education can be presented in ways that are not threatening to the participants. Many adults resolve problems quite directly with information that is factually and properly presented.

When a parent learns that only about one half of the children are toilet trained before two years of age, the parent no longer expects that her youngster must be completely trained by that age. The parent and the child benefit from the parent's more relaxed attitude. This is what parent education is all about — helping adults learn what to expect, to understand not only the child but also themselves in the role of parenting.

The purpose of this program is to introduce a body of information which has come out of many years of scientific study of children and adults. This information is easily available and can be studied like any other body of facts. Parents can and are willing to learn facts about children, and their own anxiety and despair as parents is not increased. While parent education can be carried on profitably by individuals, group study and discussion is more beneficial. Recognizing that other people share the same problems can be helpful. Finally, proponents of this view think that much can also be achieved in discussion led by trained local leaders.

Parent education, then, consists in studying children, learning facts about children, and learning interpersonal and intrapersonal relationship skills. One develops a more responsible role as a parent and can be happier, both as a person and as a parent, as a result of honest inquiry. In conclusion, PEP is a study/discussion program that helps parents develop their own parenthood philosophy.

Who Can Lead PEP Study/Discussion Groups?

The PEP study/discussion program can be led by any person trained in a helping profession, i.e. social workers, home economists, school and religious counselors, religious leaders, medical professionals (doctors, nurses), and psychologists. In addition, a lay person who has a special interest in this area, a willingness to study this manual and program and to try leading a study/discussion group should not be overlooked. In essence the PEP Bulletins are the authority, and the leader serves as the facilitator for the program. The following criteria may help in selecting a facilitator for a PEP study/discussion program.

- a person who is outgoing and has a real interest in others;
- a person who has experience in working with small groups;
- a person who is self-confident;
- a person who can tolerate other people's views without feeling the need to argue or correct the person with an opposing view;
- a person who can listen patiently and help others clarify what they are saying;
- a person who is dependable.

How to Organize and Conduct a PEP Study/Discussion Group

What Is PEP and Who Makes Up A PEP Group?

The PEP study/discussion group is based on the philosophy that participation does not imply inadequacy in one's parenting. Quite the contrary. It indicates that one is willing to recognize the importance of learning new and more effective skills for raising and disciplining a child. Emphasize that PEP is designed to deal with the normal challenges of typical parent problems and concerns. One may need to clarify that PEP is an educational program and is not designed for group therapy.

1. The PEP study/discussion program contains enough materials for a nine-week series. More materials are being planned so that PEP can become a program of continued support for parents.

2. The PEP study/discussion program can be conducted by presenting only five sessions, or as many as one feels necessary. All nine sessions in the present series are preferably conducted by the same facilitator(s).

3. The nine PEP study/discussion group sessions are designed to be given over a nine-ten week period. Each session will take one-and-one-half to two hours to complete. Weekly meetings are highly encouraged. Less frequent meetings might destroy the group atmosphere and also require time-consuming review of the previous meetings.

4. Both fathers and mothers should be encouraged to attend the meetings.

5. Parents should commit themselves to attend all of the PEP sessions to obtain maximum benefit. An opportunity should be made for the person who does not feel at ease with the program to drop out without any embarrassment.

7. The size of the PEP study/discussion group should be limited to 10-16 persons, plus the leader. This will allow time for each person to discuss concerns, questions and ideas. If more sign up, think about running two groups or offering it again at a later date.

Preparing to Lead a PEP Study/Discussion Group

1. **Physical Setting.** Many times people will suggest that a group such as this be held in someone's home. More often than not this can turn out to be disastrous for several reasons. For example, a child of a host parent might think this is a good time to get an attack of insomnia, to be hungry, or to just plain be a pest. The location chosen for such a meeting should: a) assure privacy, b) be usable for the entire series, c) be convenient for parents, d) provide a comfortable area to sit in a circle, e) be pleasant, f) be free from any distracting noises, and g) provide water, restrooms, and telephone service.

2. **Time.** The time of the program should be decided by the facilitator and the participants.

3. **Lesson Sequence.** The topics have been arranged by the author in order of importance. However, the facilitator may vary the sequence. Do what feels right for the group and yourself.

4. **Attendance.** Attendance and commitment to the group

cannot be over-emphasized. Attendance at all meetings is crucial, not only for the success of the program, but also to insure that each parent has a successful experience.

When parents miss a meeting, encourage them to call someone or have someone call them so they can stay up to date. Remember, encourage them to call each other—not you. The question—“should others be allowed in after the group has gotten started?” concerns many facilitators. The author’s opinion is no. When new members are constantly being added, it takes too long to rekindle the unity, trust, and responsibility already developed in the group.

5. **Refreshments.** Food and drink can add much to the informality of the group. However, refreshments should be considered only when they do not add unnecessarily to the work of those involved. Encourage parents to share this responsibility. Avoid alcoholic beverages. Remember the initial goal of the PEP program is to develop more skilled parents, not to decide who is the best cook.

6. **How Much Time for Preparation?** This will depend on you. The best criterion is to ask yourself: “How well do I feel I understand the topic for tonight’s discussion? If I feel good about it, then I’m prepared. If I don’t, I had better go back over it again.”

Promoting PEP

It is always possible to plan a terrific program and then have it fail because it wasn’t promoted correctly. Many a person has found out the hard way that parents just don’t leap at the opportunity to join a parent study group. Why this resistance to what seems so obviously good and necessary? Probably one of the reasons is many people do not like to let their “hair down” in public. Most people would like to appear perfect, so they avoid programs that address human problems.

Programs that draw interest usually address the positive. They emphasize fun, fellowship, friendly discussion about peoples’ ideas and usable information to enrich one’s life.

The announcement of the PEP study/discussion group should contain facts about the program, including why it is being given. The announcement, whether it be by flier, radio or TV, should be short and to the point. The following criteria may help in developing your own announcements. Tell 1) who the sponsor is, 2) when and where the meetings are to be held, 3) who will be the facilitator, 4) how to register, 5) that it is for normal parents of normal children, 6) that it is for single parents as well as two-parents of normal children, and 7) that it is a parent study/discussion group and not a therapy group.

The announcement or flier should be short, concise, and eye-catching. The announcements should be mailed to parents and organizations, i.e. public libraries, schools, family service agencies, churches, synagogues, the medical profession, etc., that you believe might be interested. Fliers should be placed in areas heavily frequented by parents. If written well, the announcement can also be used as a news release. See Appendix A for examples.

When the group is going well, and if the participants are willing, invite various people from the news media to sit in and do a story on the group. If that isn’t possible, have the group write a story or letter to the editor and take it to a newspaper. This type of publicity sometimes is better than any other.

General Direction for PEP Session

PEP has been designed to help parents develop self-confidence in their parenting skills. One can only gain this self-confidence by being allowed to experience both the

sadness of defeat and the happiness of success. In other words, the facilitator should beware of modeling the “good” parent. Instead the facilitator should model the “responsible” parent. Doing for parents what they must do for themselves will only prolong the parents’ dependence on their old ideas and on you. It is best when parents become too dependent, to use “I messages” (as described in *Bulletin 3*, “Understanding How A Parent Can Communicate With Today’s Child”).

Remember, the PEP program is based on human dignity, respect, and encouragement. The best way to teach these principles is for the facilitator to serve as the model.

How To Lead Each PEP Session

Each of the PEP study/discussion group sessions will follow this format.

1. **Statement of Objectives.** Each session will begin with an overview of what the group will be studying and discussing. Each leader’s guide contains a brief objective which can either be read to the group or preferably paraphrased for your use in the group.

2. **Discussion of Previous Week’s Assignment.** At the conclusion or near the end of each weekly meeting, an assignment is given for the coming week. The facilitator must make clear that each member has an assignment to be done for the next week. One can do this by asking participants to share their experiences and by encouraging positive efforts or evidences of progress. Enough time should be allowed so that all who want to can discuss. Encourage those who do not volunteer.

As a group facilitator, keep in mind that some people do not discuss or try assignments because of past failures. They do not have the courage to be imperfect. To help them and others in your group, briefly discuss how self-defeating attitudes—e.g., “I’ll never be able to do that,” or “I’ll only try if I know I can succeed” can prevent development of one’s potential as a parent and human being. In addition the leader may want to talk about how one learns from mistakes.

Be aware that some parents will try to turn this part of the session into a rationalization of their past failures.

Generalizations such as “All children do that,” or “My parents did it that way and I survived,” are not acceptable responses in the PEP program. *Focus participants’ attention on their progress and the future.*

Discussion of the assignment is important, but should not take up the entire session. Usually 15 minutes is sufficient.

3. **Discussing Assigned Reading.** The PEP bulletin has two purposes. The first is to acquaint parents with concepts to be discussed. The second is to help a parent try the concepts at home, to have had some first-hand experiences before the meeting.

Some ideas to help the facilitator lead this part of the discussion are:

a) Begin discussions with such open-ended questions as: “I assume you have some ideas about the reading. Who would like to share?” “What types of things did you learn from this reading?” or “How would you apply the ideas that you read about?” or “What gave you the biggest problems when you read the assignment?” Pick up on the members’ questions and concerns. It’s important to them to be acknowledged, and they also can begin to develop an atmosphere of trust and responsibility for each other.

b) Remember that there are no ridiculous questions or statements. Each person has a unique way of asking questions or making statements.

c) Be patient, do not rush. Give each member a chance to hear the questions and time to think.

d) Observe nonverbal clues of a member's confusion or need to speak. If you pick up that someone wants to talk, encourage that person to do so.

4. Parent-Child Situations. Each parent-child situation is a brief sketch of a typical conflict or concern that might arise in a family. The final outcome is incomplete. This is up to each participant to solve with the skills from PEP. Each participant should read about the situation in the bulletin and decide how to answer the questions.

Emphasize there is no single correct answer; the situations merely permit each participant to apply the PEP principles and techniques to the situation. During the discussion at the meeting further clarification can be made. The parent-child situation, if time permits and people volunteer, will make for good role-play situations at the meetings.

5. Summary Period. Probably one of the most important, if not the most important part of the PEP program as it relates to the facilitator, is the summary. Hold the summary at the close of each meeting, and ask each participant to relate something of importance in respect to the discussion. Summarizing helps members: a) to become more conscious of what was discussed and why, b) to identify and clarify what they learned, and c) to obtain instant feedback and clarification. The summary also provides the facilitator with some idea as to how well people are understanding and implementing the new parenting skills and philosophy.

A facilitator can start a summary period by asking participants, "What were some of the things you learned from tonight's session?" or "What is your opinion about some of the ideas you heard today?"

6. At-Home Activity. Each week participants will be assigned an activity to do before the next session. The purpose of the activity is to help the participant internalize the concepts of the PEP program. Make sure as a facilitator that all participants understand what it is they are supposed to do, and time will be given to discuss the activity at the next session.

7. PEP Points to Ponder. These are key points that participants have read and discussed at each session. The key points have been designed, so that they can be removed from the Bulletin and posted as a reminder of essential steps for practical parenting. Encourage participants to post the list in a prominent place at home. Remind them that their home is a "laboratory of learning."

8. My Blueprint for Improving the Parent-Child Relationship. The plan for improving the parent-child relationship allows each participant to assess privately how well one is doing and does not necessarily have to be discussed with the group. It is suggested that the facilitator discourage participants from discussing this within the group. The worksheet is designed so that each participant can identify one or two major concerns about the parent-child relationship and can give a typical response to the problem. The participant is then asked what plans have been made as a result of reading and discussing what was learned from PEP. The writing has two purposes: it becomes a commitment to action, and it invites further personal involvement in the PEP program.

9. Assigned Readings. At the close of each session, assign the appropriate bulletin from the PEP Series for the next meeting and explain its purpose.

10. PEP Contract. The PEP contract is a very important

part of the study/discussion program. Having each parent read and sign the contract helps a parent become aware of the parent role and the role of the facilitator in the group. It is suggested that the facilitator discuss this contract with the participants in order to gain a better understanding of their group experience. The original signed copy can either be kept by the facilitator or the participants.

Some Generalizations about Leading a PEP Study/Discussion Group

Now that you've agreed to be a facilitator of the PEP Study/Discussion group, you may be having some doubts and concerns. You may be asking yourself:

"Who do I think I am, telling others how to raise their children?"

"What if someone asks me if I have children?"

"What if a parent asks me a question, and I can't answer it?"

"What if" can go on forever. The point is we all have some doubts and anxiety when we take on something new. To counteract this anxiety, one should prepare oneself by thinking positive thoughts and preparing carefully.

Setting the Stage

The following will provide some ideas on performing as a PEP facilitator.

1. Inform the participants that you are not an authority on parenting. You are here to serve as a person(s) who organizes groups, who presents the program for discussion at each meeting, who makes sure all materials are available, and who leads a discussion so that each person can gain something from the experience.

2. Listen. Listen well to what others are saying, and watch what they are doing. This helps more than anything else in facilitating a good group discussion. Participants will give the correct answers, if given enough time to think and act.

3. Prepare yourself. Read the *Facilitator's Manual* and each of the bulletins in the series. By reading the assigned bulletin before each meeting you'll not only be better informed, but also you'll be better able to moderate the discussion.

Answers to Some Special Problems of Group Leadership

When practicing the various principles of group education, one will sometime find certain aspects of leadership difficult. Following are some pointers on specific questions you may have:

1. **How can I be sure participants learn what I want them to know?** You can't be sure, but the question can be turned around. Do participants always want (need) to know what you believe they should know? Might there not be other issues or matters of concern to the participants at a given time? You serve the group if you do not impose your own topics or quick interpretation of what a participant had in mind.

2. **How active should I be?** You will discover when to act (speak) if you keep your eye on the content and the tone of the discussion, coming in only for a purpose. Each facilitator must find an individual way of functioning. This comes from practice in leading study/discussion groups.

3. **How can I help the group find a common basis on which to start a session?** You can recognize what is "common" to the participants by sometimes asking what experiences the participants have had. If some of these are common, the facilitator can take it from there. It is the

participants' concern about a problem rather than the exact events, that provides the common basis for their thinking.

4. How can I guide a discussion so that the concerns of the participants are met and are meaningful for all? You must learn to recognize common threads of interest among your participants' problems and questions. As you become more experienced, you will become less rigid and more free to move from one participant's question or problem to another—and back again—as they talk about a matter of mutual interest.

Use such phrases as: "How does Mrs. Brown's question compare with Mrs. Tweedy's responses or questions?", or "what do you see as the main points of Tom's remarks, Jim?" By doing this, each participant's concern becomes merged with that of the group. Each participant can take from the discussion what is relevant and meaningful.

5. To what extent should I limit the discussion to one topic, one age period, etc.?

Sometimes you may find it quite difficult when the discussion involves various topics and age levels all at once. You should be faithful to the original commitment, but you risk cutting off material that may help provide a total picture of the problems at hand. It doesn't hurt to wander a little sometimes just to test the participants' interest in the topic.

6. Should I interpret the content participants bring up?

In your eagerness to be accepted by the group, you may accept the surface meaning of something a participant says without looking into it further. To be sure of what the participants have in mind, you must raise questions that will clarify the issue. Knowing what the participant intends to communicate is important for successful group discussion.

7. How can I get at the underlying feelings in participants' reports of situations? Often times a person will express feelings while telling about a personal event. In other words one does not have to be "got at" because one will usually say just what one feels. When others in the group share their feelings about the person's topic, it may encourage the person to open up more. Also, it will give that person a chance to see how others cope with the same or similar problems.

Putting feelings into words often helps a person in unexpected ways. A person may be unaware of the coloration of the responses and be very surprised. Given a chance to air one's feelings, a person can begin evaluating the significance of those feelings and how that problem can be dealt with.

8. How should I frame questions in order to push thinking ahead? If you understand what you are talking about, and you think before you talk, the words you choose will usually fall into place. You can be flexible in asking questions in order to focus on the issue or question. For example, when a participant brings up something that happened, you may ask whether it was usual or unusual and raise other questions to bring out certain aspects of the problem. Most helpful are those questions which pick up ideas or responses that are only half articulated and those that are presented in a sharp, provocative statement or in a significant word. When the word or statement is clarified by your question, it gives the discussion a vital push and adds material to which the other group members can react.

9. How much do I really need to know about a subject? You will at one time or another find yourself unprepared for a topic which someone will raise. When this happens it is sometimes a good idea to sit back and keep silent for a few

seconds to see if someone in the group can supply an answer or at least approach it from a different view. This may indicate how serious the problem is, how interested the group is in really discussing the problem, and most important, it will allow others a chance to guide and feel helpful. "*Remember, no one knows it all!*" Another way of handling this crisis is to ask, "what are your feelings on it?" This is called the probing question technique.

10. How much "information" should I give and when? Participants do need information about the problems they encounter. The group process provides a setting in which participants can bring out all the information they have, share it, test for its validity and implications. When you think that the information is either false, misleading, or incomplete, it is your responsibility to help the group correct it.

In practice, facilitators tend either to pour out too much information or withhold information because they want the participants themselves to obtain it from each other. The middle ground here is determined by the way the particular group functions. You must judge for yourself when your contribution is needed. You can do this by asking the group to evaluate what has been said.

11. What should be done when I am asked my personal opinion? This may puzzle a new facilitator who hasn't had experience in leading group discussions. A facilitator usually has an opinion on an issue and is eager to express it. As a facilitator one should be sure to label personal opinions and make it very clear that the point of view is based on considerations that are valid but may not hold true for others in other circumstances. What is important is for the group to know the facilitator is there to help them think matters through for themselves, as the matters apply to their own goals.

A phrase such as "what you seem to be saying" when used by the facilitator does not interfere with the free feeling which has been established. It's when the words come out with the emphasis on the "I" ("think") that the leader steps into the authoritarian role, a role which should be avoided.

12. Should I make use of informal conversation that often takes place before a meeting begins? Some facilitators feel that what takes place before a meeting starts has no place within the group discussion. In a sense, this is so, since exchange of ideas between members before the group begins does have a rather informal tone. Although when several people have been involved, as often happens, you should feel at ease in using parts of the conversation if you feel it will help get a point across. A good idea is to ask participants whether they would like to share with the group some of the matters they were talking about before the meeting.

13. How do I get the discussion stopped? Just as the beginning of the meeting is important, so is its close. A meeting should start on time and end on time—a sadly abused rule. You may sometimes feel timid about interrupting a stimulating discussion either for an intermission or for closing. You might feel you are stopping a very interesting discussion or that you might be missing a good opportunity for the group to get something out of the session. Remember if a discussion continues for an indefinite period, some of the participants when it is all over may feel they have spent too much time and will not come back. It is better to have a group want more rather than less.

14. How should I answer a question? You should redirect the question away from you. You might do this by asking other group members to think about what was just

said, something like “What do some of the rest of you think about that?” or “If that question were asked of you, how would you answer it?” By simply asking such questions, you’ve returned the question to the group, taken the responsibility for an answer off your shoulders, and removed yourself as the authoritarian figure.

Let’s suppose that no one answers one of the above questions. What do you do then? Go to the authority — your material. Ask “How do you think the author of our program would respond to that?”

Redirecting the question can help to stimulate, involve and bring the group together. You are saying to the group, “As a facilitator I have faith and a belief in your ability to find your own answers.”

How to Lead a PEP Study/Discussion Group

Any leader, whether it is a leader of a Girl Scout troop, the president of a company, or a PEP group will bring personal values, attitudes and ideas to the group. To insure success in conducting each PEP session, give some consideration to the following principles:

1. A facilitator accepts a theory of human motivation best explained by behavior that is goal-directed.
2. A facilitator accepts the theory that man is basically good and strives to please others.
3. A facilitator is sensitive to the positive encouragement a group can give each member and will promote discussion which fosters cooperation and cohesiveness.
4. A facilitator is most concerned about the needs of the participants and encourages them to grow and change.
5. A facilitator provides experiences for participants to test their own skills.
6. A facilitator avoids the role of expert or authority.
7. A facilitator encourages participants to practice what they have learned in the PEP program with their families and friends.
8. A facilitator develops an atmosphere of mutual trust and responsibility and encourages individual participants to share responsibility in keeping the group viable and optimistic even when things may be going wrong.

Not all facilitators can abide by these principles, nor should they. These principles are offered only as a goal to work toward just as each of the parents has a goal.

Creating A Loving and Caring Environment—The Facilitator’s Responsibility

To create an atmosphere for a loving and caring environment, each participant must make two commitments. The first is to trust the members of the group, and the second is taking responsibility for making the class successful.

Trust is a feeling of confidence in someone or something. As used here it is confidence in each group member. One way to develop trust in others is to be able to express one’s own ideas and feelings openly and honestly knowing that these ideas and feelings will be given a hearing, not denied, and that these ideas and feelings, negative or positive, will be listened to, not ignored.

Responsibility is developed when each member of the group helps another to achieve explicitly stated goals. For example, an individual may want to initiate statements in a group, but does not know how. Ideally, someone in the group will help that person enter the discussion. This also

holds true when a person does not want to take part and feels being pushed to do so. Someone in the group should come to the rescue.

Responsibility also means keeping a “third ear” open to what type of interaction is going on in the group (e.g., two people doing all the talking). A responsible member of the group will stop the discussion and bring out into the open what process is taking place that is causing the group discussion to break down.

In addition, the following guidelines will help to establish a loving and caring environment. These guidelines should be explained and discussed with the group.

1. **There are no right answers.** Group discussions are designed to help participants understand more clearly what they feel, think, and act. All answers should be accepted as valid for the person speaking. Neither by verbal responses, tone of voice, or non-verbal expressions should the facilitator communicate that some answers are better than other answers.

2. **The right to pass is guaranteed.** Participants must be allowed the right to pass; that is, not answer any questions which for them are too personal or too threatening.

3. **The facilitator shares personal values.** It is important that a facilitator participate freely in the group discussion. However, the facilitator must be explicit when giving personal ideas or thoughts about a topic. For example, a facilitator may say, “It’s my belief, or I feel about it this way, but you don’t have to agree with me.” By doing this, the facilitator is describing an individual point of view and at the same time letting the group know their ideas and thoughts are just as good.

Eight Leadership Skills For PEP Facilitators

Listed below are eight leadership skills that you may find helpful in leading a PEP Study/Discussion Group:

1. **Structure.** Structuring involves setting the purpose and goals of the group, the program, and the procedures of the study/discussion group meeting. Structuring helps to:

- focus on PEP’s basic principles and application and not on individual participants’ beliefs
- establish limits on discussions
- redirect participants who wander from the study/discussion group goals
- be aware of what is happening in the study/discussion group
- obtain consensus about the program and its implications

2. **Universalize.** Universalizing is a process used to help the group become aware that many of their questions and concerns are similar to others. Implementing this skill brings about group cohesiveness. A typical response to a bewildered participant might be, “Has anyone else experienced difficulty trying to _____?” or “Has anyone else been concerned about that?” As participants begin to answer the questions, they often recognize that they are not alone in having this particular problem.

3. **Link.** Linking involves identifying common elements and concerns. Listen carefully to the questions and comments being expressed. Identify the general themes being expressed, but going unnoticed. Consider using this skill in the early stages of the study/discussion group or when it seems participants are not hearing others.

4. **Feedback.** Feedback is the return of other participants’ reactions to something just said or done. Feedback allows them to see how they are perceived by the other participants.

Feedback is most effective when a participant:

- focuses on the “here and now”
- sends “I messages”
- does not demand change
- shares an observation
- allows the person to make individual decisions as to whether or not to change.

5. **Help.** Helping encourages participants to develop tentative hypotheses. This skill involves translating theory into practical parenting practices by searching out certain useful principles of behavior. The basis of the PEP program assumes that all behavior—negative and positive—has a purpose. You might want to ask the participants to:

- describe specifically what the child was doing
- describe how they felt as parents when it was happening
- describe how as parents they responded to negative or positive behavior
- describe how the child responded to the parent’s behavior
- describe the purpose of the child’s negative or positive behavior

The purpose of asking a participant to work through these steps is to have the parent recognize that behavior.

Encourage participants to hypothesize about the reasons for the behavior. By developing tentative hypotheses and risking error, participants grow and accept themselves as fallible human beings.

6. **Focus on positive behavior.** A skillful facilitator is always looking for and encouraging positive behavior. Encouragement is a most important skill for a parent, and it should be used in this study/discussion group. Participants should learn not only to give each other encouragement but also to receive it.

7. **Set tasks and obtain commitments.** Setting tasks and obtaining commitments is much like conflict resolution. Help participants identify what they are having a problem with and then help them develop a plan of action. Have the participants state how long they are willing to try it and that they will report back to the group on a given date — usually the next meeting.

8. **Summarize.** Summarizing is important. It helps the participants to:

- understand the ideas and skills that have been expressed
- integrate what they have learned
- become aware of the importance of attending all sessions

A summary usually deals with the high spots of the meetings, the feelings of the participants, and the level of the group’s involvement. Summarizing may occur in the middle as well as at end of the session. Its primary purpose is to show how the group is progressing.

Questions such as: “What did you hear the group saying tonight?” or “What did you learn from the discussion?” help get a summary started.

Summarizing helps to:

- clarify mistaken impressions
- understand where the group is as a whole unit
- bring about cohesiveness

Roles Participants Play

Each participant, knowingly or unknowingly, may block what the rest of the group is trying to do. In order to combat this, know the different roles a participant might play to manipulate a group or which may block the educational experience. These roles have been characterized by the following:

1. **The Monopolizer.** This is the person who monopolizes the conversation, wants to be the center of attention. To handle this person, you might say, “I’m very concerned that time is getting away, and we need to move on to some other things. If at the end of the session we have time, we might discuss it.” Then it is important that you do what you say—“move on.”

If this doesn’t work, you might want to deal with the problem straight on and meet with the person after the meeting. It is important that at this time you send “I messages” and be ready to do some reflective listening. If this doesn’t work, you might ask the person to drop out of the group and possibly seek individual parent counseling.

2. **The Challenger.** The person who plays the challenger role is essentially saying “prove it” to me. This person is trying to reveal the fallibility of the resources, to be set up as the authority and more times than not, assume the leadership.

There are several reasons why a person challenges, and you must be careful in both assessing the behavior and dealing with it. If the participant is challenging mainly to be the center of attention, the facilitator will have to identify positive assets and contributions that this person is making. In reality this person believes “I count only when other people are involved with me.” On the other hand, if the participant is concerned with being the authority figure, group assistance may be solicited by asking, “What seems to be happening in the group now?” or “Gene, how do you feel about what Sally has just said?” More often than not this will be enough to bring about a solution, and the group will move on.

3. **The Chatterbox.** The behavior of chatterbox, like all the other types in this section, occurs for specific reasons: The desire for recognition or self importance. A facilitator can sometimes redirect this person’s “yakkity-yak” by privately asking for help in encouraging more reserved members in the group. If direct confrontation is called for, the facilitator might say, “How does what you’re saying apply to what Bill has just expressed?” or “Could we go on, and if time permits we’ll come back to your point?”

4. **The Resister.** The resister is a person who has no real commitment to the program. In essence the resister is hoping for some type of magical spell to help control the child. A resister will become even more resistant when you point out that people must be responsible for their own results.

To the person who conveys the feeling, “try to make me,” you might say, “As a group we can’t tell you what to do; you alone must decide what’s best for you. *Our purpose in these sessions is only to study the ideas put forth in this program, so let’s continue.*” By stating this, or a like statement, you have said, “You are entitled to your beliefs but not entitled to disrupt the purpose of the group.”

5. **The Intellectualizer.** The intellectualizer is almost identical to the resister, except those who play the intellectual role resist with ideas not emotions. Just as you believe the group is moving along, up pops the intellectualizer and interrupts with “Have you considered?” or “Let’s look at this problem from several angles.”

To counter this, you can say, “You have a good point about that. Could you tie that in with what you have read?”

6. **The Attempter or “I’ll Attempt It.”** The person who says, “That sounds interesting. I’ll give it a try” or “Gee, that sounds like something I might be able to attempt,” has forgotten one of the requirements of the program; which is that a parent must make consistent, firm commitments. You

would do well to ask the parent either to change nothing or to make a commitment to following a new course of action—at least until the next session. Remind this parent and the group that expectations have much to do with one's success or failure.

7. The Impossible, The Endurer. This is a person who states "Kids will be kids," "It's only normal for a child to do that" or "It's a stage he's going through." A parent who promotes this view that unacceptable behavior is normal for the parent-child relationship is one who in essence also believes children are unavoidably "impossible to live with"—consequently, only to be put up with. This parent probably has lost hope in ever having a cooperative, responsible and enjoyable child.

You must confront these beliefs by saying, "You may feel it's not possible to improve parent-child relationships, but that is not necessarily the experiences of others present. We are here because we believe we can change behavior and improve relationships with children." Don't argue, but don't let it slide. The longer such statements go unattended the more they pull the group experience down.

8. The Shifter. This person is very good at shifting the responsibility for unsatisfactory parent-child relationships to another person i.e., spouse, neighbor, grandparent or others. Essentially what this parent is saying is, "I have no influence on my child. I am not a model to my child. It is someone else who is the significant person in my child's life." You can respond to the shifter with something like, "You seem to be saying that nothing you say or do has any influence on your relationship with your child." We hope the parent will become aware of what is really being said. Also, you may want to say, "This program is designed to clarify what we can do and not what others should do."

9. The Catastrophizer. Every group has at least one person who enjoys talking about all the calamities and catastrophies of parenthood. This person is a combination of the intellectualizer and the resister, and will ask questions such as "But what if . . . ?" and "What do you do when . . . ?" More often than not, this person hasn't experienced the event being discussed.

You might say, "It seems to me that when you say 'what if?' you are looking for reasons not to change your behavior." You may also want to turn the catastrophizer's questions around by asking, "When the child did that, how did you respond to his behavior?" By saying it this way, you have redirected attention to the purpose of the child's behavior. Encourage all participants to be specific at all times—not to generalize and intellectualize.

People assume these roles because they are being asked to change their behavior before feeling comfortable with their new knowledge and skills. With respect, trust, responsibility, and a lot of patience, you will help each person learn better ways of expression.

Stages in Group

Experience has shown that most groups will pass through three stages. The *first* stage is characterized by much enthusiasm, excitement and unrealistic hopes. Participants have high expectations of that group and of its facilitator's ability to solve parent-child problems. Many participants will feel anxious, fearful, and distrustful about discussing their parent-child relationships. During this stage much tension can be reduced by appropriate humor and a relaxed attitude.

During the *second* stage members' enthusiasm and

commitment dwindle when participants recognize they must change if their children are to change. Also, be ready for some in the group to express negative opinions about the value of the program. During the second stage, you must *continually redefine goals and objectives, help foster feedback, and be most encouraging.*

The *third* stage finds a group which has matured to the point of assuming responsibility for its own learning. At this stage the participants truly understand the importance of trust and responsibility for each other.

Each Bird Whistles Through His Own Beak

Each person who writes about parenthood, lectures about parenthood, or leads parent groups does so from his or her own background of reading about and experiencing parenthood. We can only help people clarify in their own minds what they are about as parents, not try to persuade them that "PEP" is a better way. In due time, *their own time*, they may come to realize that what they have read and heard in the group does have a place in their philosophy of parenting. What we are about is to *encourage* each participant to read, question, seek out information on parenting, to analyze this information and to apply what each person feels good about in the role of parent. Lastly we are here to help people commit themselves to learning new parenting roles and skills through group education.

Good luck. I know each of you who takes on this role of facilitator will do well.

Part Two Lesson Guides

Session 1

Notes

Topics: Democracy Begins with the Parent

Objectives:

1. To acquaint parents with study/discussion techniques used in the PEP program so growth and progress in parenting take place.
2. To help parents become acquainted with each other.
3. To introduce parents to a democratic philosophy of parenting.

Materials:

PEP Bulletin #1
Chalkboard and chalk
Ashtrays and refreshments (if you like)

Procedures:

1. *Introduction.* Begin this session by introducing yourself and telling something about yourself and briefly discussing the objectives for the total PEP program. You might say: In the PEP study/discussion program parents will:
 - a. learn a practical theory of human behavior;
 - b. learn skills to establish a more effective parent-child relationship;
 - c. improve communication between themselves and their child;
 - d. learn how to cope with everyday problems and stress and solve parent-child conflict;
 - e. learn a new approach to discipline called “natural and logical consequences” and
 - f. learn how to organize and conduct family council meetings
2. *Getting Acquainted—The Name Game.* This activity allows parents in a nonthreatening and entertaining way to get to know one another. Directions: One parent will be asked to state her/his name. Clockwise, parents give the names of previously introduced parents as well as their own name. You are also included in this activity. Finally, the last person must recall all previously named participants.
3. *Parent Expectations.* Following the Name Game encourages the parents to discuss briefly what they hope to get out of the program. Ask them to tell how many children they have, how old each is, and to talk briefly about specific concerns. If both husband and wife attend, only one need respond fully. Encourage the other spouse to comment. This is an important activity, as it immediately provides for parent input which will be stressed at all subsequent sessions. The discussion sets the tone for the study/discussion group—that this is not a lecture series but a collaboration and sharing of what the participants have read, felt, and experienced.

At the conclusion, summarize briefly the main concerns of the parents. This will provide immediate feedback to the parents, i.e., that they have been heard and understood and that positive measures will follow to help them in their concerns. Stress the importance of

attendance for maximum benefit. Questions by parents may be raised and answered.

4. *Group Comfort, Rules and Roles.* Expect that each person including you will feel uneasy at the beginning. To remove some of the anxiety, discuss the following group dynamics procedures.

Notes

- a. *Comfort—Housekeeping Duties:* Here are examples of the kind of questions that need to be asked at this part of the session.
 - Does everyone know where the restrooms and phones are?
 - Are there any special rules that need to be indicated, i.e., smoking or no smoking?
 - Will anyone have to leave early, or miss any session, or part of a session?
 - What about breaks and refreshments, and who will be responsible for what?
 - Does anyone have a special need or problem, i.e. hearing, or sitting problem?
 - Does anyone have anything to add to this list?

Reasoning: This discussion carries a special and potent message to your group: that you care about and are concerned with every person present, and each person's comfort, and needs are important to you. This provides another way of making a connection to each person. At the same time, you will be modeling some interpersonal skills used in a democratic relationship: respect and responsibility.

- b. *Discussion Guidelines—*Every group, family, institution, and society has rules or guidelines. In fact no society would exist without rules or guidelines. Rules should not be viewed as a threat, but as a way of making sure that people get what they want. In a study/discussion group, rules help participants present ideas, questions, feelings, and values. The following guidelines may help:
 - (1) There are no right answers or statements. PEP Study/Discussion programs are designed to help individuals understand more clearly how they feel, think, and act. Neither by verbal responses, tone of voice nor non-verbal expression should the discussion leader communicate that some answers or statements are better than others.
 - (2) The Right to Pass is Guaranteed. Participants must be allowed the right to pass; that is, not answer any question which for them is too personal or threatening. This also applies to participating in skill-building exercises.
 - (3) The Facilitator Shares Her/His Values. It is important that a facilitator participates freely in the PEP program. However, the facilitator must be explicit when giving ideas or thoughts about a topic. For example, a leader may say, "It is my belief," or "I feel about it this way, but you don't have to agree with me." By doing this, the leader is telling the group her/his stand, and at the same time letting them know their ideas and thoughts are just as good.
 - (4) PEP Program will start on time and end on time.

- (5) Stay with the Topic. In discussion groups it is easy to wander, generalize, and drift into social conversation. Each of us will need to help one another stay with the topic. We can do this by asking ourselves “How does this relate to what we’ve been discussing?”
- (6) Become an Involved Participant. Each person will benefit most when all members of the group are thinking about the topic and are willing to share their thoughts. It is just as important to ask for clarification when you are confused or do not understand something as it is to make a statement or present another side of the issue. Stress that we are here to understand the ideas presented in PEP and to decide how they will apply to our parent-child relationships.
Encourage those in the group who are vocal to help those who remain silent. You can do this by having the vocal member ask such things as “What do you think about the ideas just presented, Sam?”
- (7) Share Our Time. Avoid monopolizing the conversation or the time in group discussion. To do this one can check by asking, “What seems to be keeping us from reaching our goal or making progress on this topic?”
- (8) Be Patient—Make Haste Slowly. People who are exposed to new ideas and skills will often have more questions than answers at first. At the same time parents will want to see instant changes in their children. However, it is more reasonable to expect things to change slowly over time and to expect some setbacks. Take one step at a time and avoid trying to develop all skills at once. To keep yourself in check, you might ask, “Are you expecting too much of yourself and your children?”
- (9) Support and Encourage Each Person. Change and self confidence derive from group encouragement. Have people ask themselves, “How can I encourage Jane?” and “How can Jane encourage her child?” With practice, this ability to encourage will soon be used with their children.
- (10) Be Accountable for Your Own Behavior. Each of us must be accountable not only to others in the group for our own behavior, but also to ourselves. Therefore we should be certain that our comments and actions are a constructive.

In addition to telling the group these guidelines, you may want to ask them if they have guidelines to add.

- c. Study/Discussant’s Roles. Briefly discuss the importance of various roles that individuals play in groups and the importance of developing trust and responsibility. Ask the parents to talk about what trust is and about what responsibility is when it is applied to a group meeting. The following is a short explanation of both words and how they apply to groups.

—Trust is a feeling of confidence in someone or something. As used in the study/discussion group, it is confidence in each parent within the group. One way of showing confidence is to be able to

express one's own ideas and feelings openly and honestly with others and to know that these ideas and feelings will be accepted—not denied—whether they are negative, neutral, mixed, or positive.

- Responsibility is developed when each parent in the group helps another to achieve explicit goals. For example, an individual in the group may want to initiate statements but not know how. Someone may sense this and encourage that person. This also holds true when a person does not want to express her/himself and find she/he is being pushed. Someone should come to the rescue.

After discussing trust and responsibility you will want to discuss the following roles participants may play. This helps set the stage that all have a right to their ideas and are responsible for each other. Collaboration and sharing of ideas about these roles is very important. Ask the parents what is meant by each role, or explain the various roles and what each means. It is more meaningful if they discuss the roles, and you clarify their statements. To do this you may want to list the various roles on a blackboard or make posters depicting each role. (For explanation of these refer to leader's manual pages 7 and 8.)

- Maggie Monopolizer
- Charlie Challenger
- Suzi Chatterbox
- William Resister
- Harriet Intellectual
- Billy Attemptor
- Sam Impossible
- Sally Shifter
- Hazel Catastrophizer

At the conclusion of this segment you may want to ask the group if they have any questions about the discussion roles.

1. **PEP Contract.** Each parent is handed the PEP contract to read and sign. The primary purpose of the contract is to fix in each parent's mind the seriousness of the training program and what commitment it will require. You may find some parents will decide to drop out. After reading and signing the contract, they should keep one copy and give you back the other one. If anyone wishes to discuss it, let them, but avoid spending a long time on the contract.
2. **PEP Bulletin #1—"Democracy Begins With the Parent."** If you have not already handed PEP bulletins out to the parents, do so now. (It is up to you whether or not you want to hand out the total series or individual bulletins for each meeting.) Allow about 10 to 15 minutes for each parent to read Bulletin #1 "Democracy Begins With the Parent." You might consider using some of the questions below to start the discussion.
(Note: Focus on the reading—avoid focusing on personal problems or even trying to defend the material. If someone does bring up a personal concern, you might ask, "What does the reading say about this?" It is this session that sets the stage for other sessions.)
3. **General Question Starter.** Use these questions only if your group does not have any of its own.
 - a. What are some important points stressed in the bulletin?
 - b. What is meant by the democratic approach to parenting?

- c. How would you define parenting?
 - d. Why are the four R's important to the democratic style of parenting?
 - e. The author points out that parents have certain "pet ideas" or myths about parenting. Which of the myth(s) mentioned do you find interesting and worth thinking about?
 - f. In general what do you think about the democratic style of parenting?
4. **Summary.** Summarizing is important to the learning process for both you and the participants. Following the general discussion of the bulletin ask parents to summarize what they believe to be the most important ideas discussed at the meeting. This can be accomplished by asking one of the following questions:
- a. What did you learn from today's meeting?
 - b. What is your reaction to the ideas presented?
 - c. What do you believe were the key points brought out?
5. **At-Home Activity.** Assign the At-Home Activity found in Bulletin#1. Discuss the importance of this activity and let them know that it will be discussed at the beginning of Session 2. Remind parents of the importance of trying all activities in the bulletin and to review PEP Tips To Ponder. Tell them that PEP Tips to Ponder is perforated so that it can be torn out and tacked to a wall or bulletin board. Stress the importance of doing the My Blue Print For Improving Parent-Child Relationships. Emphasize that this form is theirs, and it is for their private use only. You will not call on them to discuss it.
6. **Assigned Reading.** Ask parents to read "Encouragement: Building A Child's Self Worth," Bulletin #2 of the PEP Series before the next session. Inform the participants that it may provide them with some new ideas about encouragement. Also you may want to tell them to re-read Bulletin #1 since some may have had to hurry through it. Stress the value of doing the exercises in order to achieve maximum benefit.

Topics: *Encouragement: Building a Child's Self Worth*

Objectives:

1. To help parents understand the concept and process of encouragement.
- 2 To help parents distinguish between encouragement and praise or reward.

Materials:

PEP Bulletin #2, "Encouragement: Building a Child's Self Worth"
Chalkboard and chalk

Procedures:

1. Discussion of At-Home-Activity.

Discuss the At-Home-Activity from Session #1. Ask, "Would anyone like to share her/his experience?" Because this is the first time participants are asked to discuss and report on their activity, it is important to remember the following points:

- a. It is important to do the activities.
- b. Encourage positive efforts that participants make both in taking part and sharing in the experience. Allow approximately 15 minutes.

2. Discussion of Assigned Reading.

The reading assigned for this session was "Encouragement: Building a Child's Self Worth," Bulletin #2 in the PEP Series. Use one or more of the following questions, or, if you like, develop your own.

Discussion Questions

- a. What are some important points stressed in the bulletin?
 - b. How can you apply what you read and studied?
 - c. Does anyone have a question about what he or she has read?
 - d. What does the author mean by encouragement?
 - e. Why is it important for a parent to learn new words and phrases in order to effect a change in a child in a child's behavior and self worth?
 - g. What are some specified ideas one can use in developing encouragement in the parenting process?
 - h. What are some words that encourage, and how do they differ from words that discourage?
 - i. What is the difference between encouragement and praise?
3. Keep in mind that discussion should focus on:
- a. What the ideas and principles mean to parenting.
 - b. How these ideas and principles can be applied to each person's role of parenting.
 - c. **Exercise I. Words of encouragement.**
Following are some typical situations in a parent/child relationship. Read this situation aloud to the participants. Ask each to write how he or she would respond.

Situation—

- (1) Your daughter has just presented you with a pot holder she made at a recreation program.
- (2) Your son has helped you clean the garage.

- (3) Your daughter is on the first string of the basketball team at school. Over the past few weeks she has been the leading scorer. Tonight she could hardly hit the basket.
- (4) Your daughter has her first dance recital scheduled. She's nervous and scared.
- (5) Your son has always picked up his belongings around the house. Lately he has been slipping.

d. **Exercise #2. What Would You Do If . . . ?**

- (1) Read the following case history to the participants. Ask them to keep in mind these questions:
 - (a) What might the child be saying to himself?
 - (b) How, as this child's parent, would you encourage the child?
- (2) Have an open discussion once you read the case aloud to the participants.

Case History

Your son has been nominated as one of three captains for the football team. Elections were held today, and your son came in second. He arrives home discouraged and somewhat angry.

- (3) **Summary** Summarization is very important to the total learning process of both you and the participants. It allows each person to identify and clarify major points. It helps you to identify the progress of the group in understanding and implementing the new skills. The questions you might ask are:
 - (a) What were some of the important things you learned from this session? (Place on chalkboard)
 - (b) How can you use these ideas in your own parent/child situations?
- (4) **At-Home Activity.**
For the next session, ask participants to really concentrate on encouraging only one child in the family. Ask them to observe what happens and how the encouraged child responds. Also ask them to observe what happens to the other children if they have more than one. In addition, tell them that some time will be given in the next session to report on their experience.
- (5) **Reminder to Participants**
 - (a) Encourage any positive behavior exhibited by your child during the week.
 - (b) Examine PEP Tips to Ponder for aid in practicing and implementing these skills at home.
 - (c) Do "My Blueprint for Improving the Parent/Child Relationship."
- (6) **Assigned Reading.** Ask participants to read "Responsible Communication: How to Talk with Today's Child," Bulletin #3 of the PEP Series, before the next session. Tell them that it may provide them with some new communication ideas and skills.

Topic: *Responsible Communication:
How to Communicate With Today's Child*

Objectives:

1. To enable parents to identify the feelings and the content of a child statement.
2. To enable parents to send a feeling message.
3. To identify various communication styles and how these styles influence responsible communication.

Materials:

PEP Bulletin #3
Chalkboard and chalk

Procedures:

1. Discussion of At-Home Activity.

Discuss with the group the At-Home Activity from Session #2. Refer back to Session #2 for specific questions to ask to get the discussion started. If you feel anyone has had difficulty in using encouragement, you may want to review the concept briefly.

2. Discussion of Assigned Reading.

The reading assignment for this session was "Responsible Communication: How to Talk with Today's Child," Bulletin #3 in the PEP series. You may want to consider using one or more of the questions below to get your discussion started. Remember—sometimes the group will come up with their own questions.

Discussion questions:

- a. What are some points stressed in the reading?
- b. How can you apply what you read and studied?
- c. What are some questions you have about the reading?
- d. What is involved in being a good listener?
- e. Why is it important to tell a child how you feel?

3. Exercise 1: Responsive Listening

This exercise is designed to let the participants practice listening skills and become aware of strengths a person has in communication. Before starting the exercise, review attitudes and behaviors that make communication effective and those that block and inhibit good communication. Say "For this exercise I am going to read four statements to you, and I will ask you to repeat them back to me, one at a time. If you like you may write them down."

- a. Today I went shopping for a brown shirt, but I ended up buying a blue shirt.
- b. I don't know what I think of the new school program for third graders. If my child were going there, I guess I would go along with it.
- c. There are many times when I feel capable of doing something else. Sometimes I wish I could be my own boss.
- d. My brother who is 16 left home about a year ago without telling anyone. We had no idea where he was. Suddenly, out of the blue he called. Boy were we happy!

Inform the group that what they have just done is a form of responsive listening. Ask them if they have any questions.

4 Exercise 2: Responsive Listening, Part II.

For this exercise, divide into groups of three and assume the following roles, in turn:

Listener. Responsively listen to the speaker using verbal and nonverbal behaviors that communicate responsive listening. Use door openers, open questioning and reflection of content, and feelings in your conversation. To help the listener get started, you might give them such open statements as: "You feel." "I hear you saying . . ." "Sounds like . . ." "Do you mean . . ." "You feel . . . because . . ." You might also want to ask the group for their own statements.

Speaker: Discuss with the listener a problem that you have just had with your child.

Observer: Sit a little to the side and make notes of your observations of the listener. For example check the listener's nonverbal behavior (i.e. leaning toward speaker, eye contact) and verbal behavior (sending feedback, using silence, and door openers, open questioning).

Allow approximately five minutes for this activity. At the end of the five minutes, shift roles so that each participant can play every role. Be sure each observer takes notes.

After completing the three to five-minute interviews spend about five minutes in the triad sharing observations with person observed (listener). Ask participants to make a list of behaviors and responses which emerged as being important for responsive listening and a list that tells when a person is not listening.

Return to the large group and share the list in the total group.

5 Exercise 3: Responsive-I-Messages

Review the three parts to a responsive-I-message and emphasize that they do not necessarily have to be delivered in this order:

Part I—Describes the behavior of the child which is interfering with you. "When you don't come home from the dance on the agreed time . . ."

Part II—Parent states feeling which is produced inside of him because of the action. ". . . I begin to worry that something may have happened to you . . ."

Part III—Parent states how it interferes in her/his life. ". . . and I can't sleep."

For this exercise have participants write out answer or verbally answer with a responsive-I-message to each of the following situations.

- a. Your daughter has left her bicycle in the driveway.
- b. You are planning to have company. Your son has said he will be home early to help. He arrives late and causes you much trouble.
- c. Your daughter forgets to feed the parakeet.
- d. Your son throws rotten tomatoes against the neighbor's house.

6. Summary. Recall to yourself the importance of the summary and ask participants to give you some

feedback as to what went on in the session. Ask such questions as:

- What did you learn in this session?
- What parts can you implement in your own role as a parent?

Notes

- 7 **At-Home Activity.** Ask participants to practice responsive listening and sending responsive-I-messages. Remind parents to examine their PEP Tips to Ponder for aid in practicing these skills at home.
8. **Assigned Reading.** Ask participants to read “Exploring Alternatives to Resolve Differences in the Parent-Child Relationship,” Bulletin #4 of the PEP Series before the next meeting. Again emphasize that it will provide them with new ideas about how parents can help their child resolve differences which come up in the parent-child relationship.

Session 4

Topics: *Exploring Alternatives to Resolve Differences in the Parent-Child Relationship.*

Objectives:

1. To help parents understand the concepts and process of Exploring Alternatives.
2. To help parents apply Exploring Alternatives to the parent/child relationship.

Materials:

PEP Bulletin #4, "Communication—Exploring Alternatives to Resolve Differences in the Parent-Child Relationship."

Chalkboard and chalk

Chart Title: "Essentials of Conflict Resolution"

(This may be made from the chart found in the bulletin.)

Procedures:

1. **Discussion of At-Home Activity.** Discuss with the group the At-Home Activity from Session 3. Parents were asked to practice responsive listening and sending responsive-I-messages with their child. Ask who would like to share his or her experience with the group. Try to model responsive listening and responsive-I-messages as participants begin to relate their experience. Assure them that it will take time to develop these communication skills and that from time to time they will find themselves falling back to old communication skills they previously used. This is OK. If you find some participants had trouble putting these concepts into practice you may want to review Responsive Listening and Responsive-I-Messages for a short period of time.
2. **Discussion of Assigned Reading.** The reading assigned for this session was "Exploring Alternatives to Resolve Differences in the Parent-Child Relationship," Bulletin #9 in the PEP Series. Use one or more of the following questions to get the discussion started. Also, if you like you may want to develop your own questions.

Discussion Questions:

- a. What are some points stressed in this bulletin?
 - b. How can you apply what you read and studied?
 - c. Does anyone have a question about what he or she read?
 - d. What is meant by exploring alternatives?
 - e. Who can briefly state the different stages in exploring alternatives?
 - f. What do you feel are the most important parts of exploring alternatives?
 - g. Why does exploring alternatives work?
 - h. What happens when someone breaks an agreement?
3. **Chart: "Essentials of Exploring Alternatives."**
Allow a few minutes for the participants to look over the chart. Ask a participant to give his or her perceptions of the chart and how it is helpful in understanding the

concept of Exploring Alternatives. At the conclusion you may want to ask other participants:

- a. Does anyone have any questions about Exploring Alternatives?
- b. How does this chart help you in pulling together many of the skills you have learned in PEP?

4. Exercise I — Putting It All Together

This exercise allows participants an opportunity to put all the skills they have learned in PEP into practice.

Situation—

Mrs. Smith has been taking a course in learning how to become a more effective parent. She has studied various parenting skills, i.e. coping, communications, discipline. For the most part her children Susie, 12, Bill, 10, and Carol, 8, have responded well to the skills she has used with them. At the present time she and her husband, who was somewhat skeptical of her taking the course but in recent weeks has seen a marked improvement in family relationships, are trying to decide where to go on vacation. Deciding on where and when to go on vacation has always been a hassle in the family.

Mrs. Smith feels this would be a good time to use conflict resolution. At this same time she feels that it is risky to ask the family to sit down and try to solve it together.

Questions—

- a. What would you do if you were Mrs. Smith? Why?
- b. Are there any faulty assumptions or beliefs that may keep Mrs. Smith from following through with her idea?
- c. Ask various members now to role play this situation. Have someone be the mother, someone the father, someone be Susie, someone be Bill, and someone be Carol. Role play for about ten minutes and discuss.

Stress the importance of the mother, especially using as many of her new skills as possible.

5. Exercise II — The Party

Mr. Wilcox and his wife Tina have been invited to the Wilson's for a party. There will be many of their friends and also some strangers present. Both of the Wilsons in the past eight weeks have actively been involved in learning new parenting skills. Their children Judy, age 5, Tim, age 9, Cathy, age 11, have become very helpful around the home, compared to the way they used to be, fighting, bickering, and dodging duties.

At the party a father mentions to Mr. Wilcox how uncontrollable, uncooperative, and disrespectful his children are, especially the 14-year-old. One father states, "Oh, that's a stage; they'll soon grow out of it and into a worse stage. Enjoy it while you can." Mr. Wilcox suggests that this father might try attending one of the classes he has been attending. He tells his friend that it sure has helped him in dealing with his children. The person who said, "Oh, it's just a stage" comes back with, "Oh, Tom, are you still going to those classes? I thought by now you would have seen the light."

Mr. Wilcox now feels he is in a dilemma. The person that he was talking with is still standing there asking more questions. The friend with the mouth is trying to put him down and what's worse, more people have gathered around him to see what he has to say. He

begins to think: “Why me? Why should I have to explain it? What happens if I don’t explain it right?”

Questions —

- a. What are some faulty beliefs that Mr. Wilcox is having at the party?
- b. What might Mrs. Wilcox do at the party, since many people are gathering around her husband?
- c. What would you do?
- d. Ask your group to role play this situation. Do this by making up cards with the name Mr. Wilcox on one, and Mrs. Wilcox on another one, etc.
- e. Ask participants to discuss how they felt in the roles that they played.
- f. Ask Mr. and Mrs. Wilcox how they felt when they role-played the situation.
- g. What important points did each participant learn from role playing?
- h. How can each person apply this to his or her own situation?
- i. Does anyone have a question about what he or she just did or saw?
- j. Does anyone want to make any comments on what he or she just did or saw?

6. Summary.

Summarization is very important to the total learning process of both you and the participants. It allows each person to identify and clarify points which she/he is not clear on. It helps you to identify how far along the group has come in understanding and implementing the new skills. The questions you might ask are:

- a. What were some of the important things you learned from this session? (You may want to put these on the chalkboard.)
- b. How can you use these ideas in your own parent/child situations?

7. At-Home Activity.

For the next session, ask participants to practice using the skill Exploring Alternatives with one child in the family, to choose a situation in which they feel comfortable using this skill, and to discuss the skill first with the child before trying it. Reassure the participants that they can discuss the experience at the next session.

8. Reminder to Participants

- a. Encourage any positive behavior exhibited by your child during the week. Make sure you tell the child so—preferably with a responsive-I-message.
- b. Examine Practical Parenting Tips for aid in practicing and implementing these skills at home.
- c. Do “My Blueprint for Improving the Parent/Child Relationship.”

9. **Assigned Reading.** Ask participants to read “Managing Your Emotions in Parenting,” Bulletin #5 of the PEP Series, before the next session. Inform the participants that it will provide them with some new ideas about coping with their child’s behavior. Stress the value of doing the exercises in the material in order to achieve maximum benefit from PEP.

Session 5

Topic: *Managing Your Emotions in Parenting*

Objectives:

1. To review previous week's assignment and answer any questions related to it.
2. To acquaint parents with Ellis' Rational-Emotive theory on behavior.
3. To discuss how Rational-Emotive behavior theory can be used in analyzing parent-child interaction.
4. To demonstrate an approach for parents to use in increasing their own rational control in responses to parent-child interactions.
5. To help parents begin to understand the importance of self-talk in problem situations involving their children.
6. To provide parents with practice in doing RSCs and to encourage the use of RSCs in their parent-child interactions and other interactions as well.

Materials:

PEP Bulletin #5
Blackboard and Chalk

Procedures:

1. **Discussion of the At-Home Activity for the Week.**
Discuss with the participants the At-Home Activity from Session 4. Parents were asked to try the skill Exploring Alternatives with one child. Ask the group who would like to share their experience. If you find some participants had trouble putting these concepts into practice you may want to review this skill Exploring Alternatives for a short period of time.
2. **Discussion of Assigned Reading.** The assigned reading for this session was "Managing Your Emotions in Parenting," Bulletin #5 in the PEP Series. Consider using one or several of the questions below to discuss the reading. At the same time remember that discussion should focus on:
 - a. What the ideas and principles mean to parenting.
 - b. How these ideas and principles can be applied to my role as parent?
3. **Discussion Questions**
 - a. What are some points stressed in the reading?
 - b. How can you apply what you read and studied?
 - c. Do you have any questions about what you read?
 - d. Do you ever use emotions to influence your child?
 - e. What is meant by the ABCs of emotion?
 - f. How does RSC work?
 - g. Why is it important to apply the Five Characteristics of Rational Thinking to our emotions? Is a person's behavior irrational if he obtains only three of the Five Characteristics of Rational Thinking?
 - h. Does a person always have to behave rationally?
 - i. What is imagery?
4. Ask participants to give examples of parent-child situations which involve themselves and their child in stressful situations. Have the group as a whole do an RSC To help the group get started refer them to the 12 irrational and rational beliefs.

If no one has a problem or some reluctance is sensed as to discussing a personal problem, suggest the following situation:

Mr. Smith has just been discussing with his son whose responsibility it should be to put away the tricycle. His son says: "Shut up, Dad."

- a. What do you think happens next in this story?
- b. How do you think this father feels toward the child?
- c. What must this parent begin to do if he is to be in control of the situation and think rationally?

5. **Summary.** Summarization is very important to each session. It allows you to identify what ideas and concepts participants do or do not understand. Also it allows you to get feedback on how the sessions are going.

The summary can deal either with the session's reading assignment or with the feelings of the group about the material.

You may want to begin the summary with one of the following questions:

- a. What did you learn from tonight's meeting?
- b. What is your reaction to the ideas presented in this session?

6. **At-Home Activity.** Ask participants to write out at least five RSCs that involve a parent-child interaction by applying the Five Criteria of Rational Thinking to the situation. Remind parents to look over PEP Tips to Ponder for aid in practicing this at home. Again emphasize the importance of doing all activities found in the bulletin. Reassure the participants that their experience will be discussed at the next session.
7. **Assigned Reading.** Ask participants to read "Understanding a Child's Behavior and Misbehavior," Bulletin #6 of PEP Series before the next session. Inform the participants that it may provide them with some new ideas about how to understand their child's behavior.

Topic: *Understanding a Child's Behavior and Misbehavior*

Objectives:

1. To help parents better understand their child's behavior.
2. To help parents learn how to identify their child's Attention Getting Mechanism (A.G.M.).
3. To help parents learn how they reinforce their child's behavior and misbehavior.
4. To help parents learn the importance of the family constellation in respect to a child's behavior.

Material:

PEP Bulletin #4—"Understanding a Child's Behavior and Misbehavior"

Chalkboard and chalk

Chart—"Goals of the Misbehaving Child"

Procedures:

1. **Discussion of At-Home Activity** Discuss with the group the At-Home Activity from Session 5, which was to practice writing RSCs on certain parent-child interactions of their choice. Ask who would like to share his or her experience with the group. Try to model responsive listening and responsive-I-messages as participants begin to relate to the group about their experiences. Encourage any positive behavior that participants relate to the group about their experience. Assure them that it will take time to develop doing RSCs and that from time to time they will find themselves falling back to behavior they previously used, and this is to be expected. If you find some participants had trouble putting the ABCs into practice you may want to review the ABCs.
2. **Discussion of Assigned Reading.** The reading assigned for this session was "Understanding the Child's Behavior and Misbehavior," Bulletin #6 in the PEP Series. Use one or more of the following questions to start the discussion. You may think of other questions which you feel your participants may relate to better.
3. **Discussion Questions**
 - a. What are some important points stressed in the bulletin?
 - b. How can you apply what you read and studied?
 - c. Do you have any questions about the reading?
 - d. Why is it important to understand a child as a social, decision-making being whose psychological pattern and style of life has purpose?
 - e. Why does a child misbehave?
 - f. What are the four goals of misbehavior?
 - g. What should a parent do when a child inappropriately seeks attention, power, revenge, inadequacy?
 - h. Does the author believe it important for a parent to change his or her own behavior? If so why?
 - i. Does the birth order of a child play an important role in her/his behavior?
4. **Chart 6**—Display the chart "Goals of the Misbehaving Child." Allow a few minutes for displaying and discussing this chart. You might want to ask someone in the group to explain the "Four Goals of Misbehavior." After the overview you may want to ask:

- a. Does anyone have any questions about the four goals of misbehavior?
 - b. How do you feel about it?
5. **Exercise 1: Identifying Types of Misbehavior**
Exercise Instruction
- a. As you read the following parent-child activities, have participants keep in mind these questions:
 - (1) How do you think the parent felt about how the child behaved?
 - (2) Did the parent do anything to continue the child's misbehavior?
 - (3) How did the child respond to the parents' behavior?
 - (4) What was the child's goal?
 - b. After you have read the situation, you may want to review the questions above and ask the following questions:
 - (1) What was the purpose of James' behavior?
 - (2) What brought you to that decision about the purpose of James' behavior?
 - (3) Describe ways a child might use power in a parent-child relationship.

Ten-year-old James wanted to go to Larry's house. Half way out the door his mother yelled, "Have you done all your chores?" His reply was, "Most of them, Mom." Mother asked, "What do you mean — most of them? You are not going anywhere until you've finished all of them."

A few minutes passed, and mother didn't hear any noise coming from where James was supposed to be. She decided she had better investigate. She found James reading a comic book. This made her mad and she said, "Put down that comic book right now and get your chores done."

A little while later Mom returned and saw that James really had not done all that he was supposed to do. She threatened him by saying, "Wait till your father gets home — he'll straighten you out." Finally after about an hour of threats and demands the chores got done to some degree. Mother is tired and James has finally gotten Mom to the point of saying, "Oh, I guess it's all right to go."

Exercise 2

For the next 10 minutes, have participants individually write out on a piece of paper a parent-child situation involving one of the four goals of misbehavior. Collect all these papers and distribute one each to the participants. Have each participant read his or hers to the group. Ask the reader to ask the same or similar questions that you did in the previous parent-child situation. (You might want to put those questions on the board.)

At the conclusion of the discussion ask the reader how he or she feels about the situation. Do not spend more than five minutes on any one parent-child situation.

6. **Summary.** Summarization is very important to the total learning process of both the facilitator and the participants. It allows each person to identify and clarify in her/his mind points which they are either not clear on or still have questions about. It helps you to identify how far along the group has come in understanding and

implementing the new skills. The questions you might ask are:

- a. What were some of the important things you learned from this session? (You may want to put these on the chalkboard.)
 - b. How can you use these ideas in your own parent-child situations?
7. **At-Home Activity.** Ask participants to observe one child in their family and to analyze this child's behavior according to the four goals of misbehavior discussed in this session. To do this you might share with them the following criteria:
- a. What did the child do?
 - b. What was the purpose of the child's behavior?
 - c. How did they feel about the child's behavior?
 - d. What type of action did they take?
 - e. How did the child respond to their action?

In addition urge the participants to encourage any positive behavior which their child exhibits during the week. Again reassure the group that they will have a chance to discuss their experience within the group during the next session.

8. **Reminder to Participants**

- a. Encourage any positive behavior exhibited by your child during the week. Make sure you tell the child so—preferably with a responsive-I-message.
 - b. Examine PEP Tips to Ponder for aid in implementing and practicing these parenting skills at home.
 - c. Do "My Blueprint for Improving the Parent-Child Relationship."
9. **Assigned Reading.** Ask participants to read "How to Discipline a Child through Using Natural and Logical Consequences," Bulletin #7 of the PEP Series, before the next meeting. Emphasize this bulletin will help parents learn how to develop responsibility and respect in the parent-child relationship.

Topic. *How to Discipline a Child through Using Natural and Logical Consequences*

Objectives:

- 1 To acquaint parents with the concepts of natural and logical consequences.
- 2 To help parents learn procedures for using natural and logical consequences.
- 3 To help parents learn that a child, not the parent, is responsible for his own behavior.
- 4 To help parents learn that a child must make his or her own decision about what course of action is appropriate
- 5 To help parents learn that a child will learn from the natural or social order of events.

Materials.

PEP Bulletin #7, "How to Discipline a Child through Using Natural and Logical Consequences"

Chalkboard and chalk

Chart—*The Major Characteristics and Differences Between Punishment, and Natural and Logical Consequences*

Procedures:

- 1 **Discussion of At-Home Activity**
Discuss with the group the At-Home Activity from Session #6. Parents were asked to observe one child and analyze that child's behavior according to the four goals of misbehavior. In addition they were given a list of statements to use in analyzing their child's behavior. You might also want to talk about how or if encouragement has changed their perception of their child.
- 2 **Discussion of Assigned Reading** The reading assigned for this session was "How to Discipline a Child through Using Natural and Logical Consequences," Bulletin #7 in the PEP Series. Use one or more of the following questions to start the discussion. If you like, develop your own questions.
3. **Discussion Questions**
 - a What are some important points stressed in the bulletin?
 - b How can you apply what you read and studied?
 - c Do you have any questions about the reading?
 - d. How do natural consequences differ from logical consequences?
 - e. How does one use natural consequences? Logical consequences?
 - f. What are four basic rules for helping a child assume responsibility?
 - g What are some techniques to use for logical consequences?
- 4 **Chart—*The Main Characteristics and Differences Between Punishment and Natural and Logical Consequences***. Allow a few minutes for the participants to look over the chart. Ask someone to explain her/his perception of the chart and how it helps in understanding the concepts of punishment and natural and logical consequences. At the conclusion of the overview you may want to ask:
 - a. Does anyone have any questions about punishment

- and natural and logical consequences?
- b. How does this chart help you distinguish between natural and logical consequences?

5 Parent-Child Situation

Exercise 1. Is it a natural or logical consequence?

Following are some typical parent-child situations which parents will find themselves in from time to time. In each situation have the participants:

- a. Identify what would be an appropriate natural or logical consequence.
- b. Decide how the consequence would be presented.
- c. Decide how you the parent would act or what you would say after the child has chosen what he or she will do.

(You may want to write these questions on the chalkboard:)

- a. Ted and Alice's children are always leaving their toys strewn around the family room. Both parents find themselves yelling at the children to pick up the toys. How can Ted and Alice use consequences in this situation?
- b. Every morning Janet, who is 8, makes her mother take time out to get her dressed and ready for school. What can mother do?
- c. Jackie, age 9, and Nancy, age 7, are sisters—they argue and fight constantly. Usually the fights are broken up by either Mom or Dad howling at Jackie to stop it—she's the oldest, and she should set an example for her sister by getting along. The parents have tried everything, from spanking to sitting each child in a corner. Both continue to fight. What can Mom and Dad do?

Exercise #2. Your Own Situation

Ask parents to write out their own parent-child situation which may be giving them trouble. Pick these up and exchange them among participants. Have participants read and discuss what they would do in this situation if they were to use consequences. If you like you may ask other participants what they would do in each situation. Allow approximately three minutes for each person.

- 6. **Summary.** Summarization is very important to the total learning process of both the facilitator and the participants. It allows each person to identify and clarify in her/his mind points which are not clear. It helps you to identify how far along the group has come in understanding and implementing the new skills. The questions you might ask are:
 - a. What were some of the important things you learned from this session? Place on the chalkboard.
 - b. How can you use these ideas in your own parent-child situations?
- 7. **At-Home Activity.** For the next session, ask participants to practice natural and logical consequences with one child in the family. Suggest choosing a situation in which success can be achieved by using natural and logical consequences. Reassure the participants that their experience will be discussed at the next session.
- 8. **Reminder to Participants**
 - a. Encourage any positive behavior exhibited by your child during the week. Make sure you tell the child so—preferably with a responsive-I-message.

- b. Examine PEP Points to Ponder for aid in practicing and implementing these skills at home.
 - c. Do *My Blueprint for Improving the Parent-Child Relationship*.
9. **Assigned Reading.** Ask participants to read *Discipline and Punishment: Is There a Difference?* Bulletin #8 of the PEP Series, before the next session. Emphasize this will help paraents become more aware of how discipline builds respect and responsibility in the parent-child relationship.

Notes

Topic: *Discipline and Punishment: Is There a Difference?*

Objectives:

1. To help parents understand the concept and process of discipline.
2. To demonstrate the difference between discipline, punishment, and rewards.

Materials:

PEP Bulletin #8, "Discipline and Punishment: Is There a Difference?"

Chalkboard and chalk

Procedures:

1. Discussion of At-Home Activity

Discuss with the group the At-Home Activity from Session 7. Parents were asked to observe one child in their family and to analyze this child's behavior according to the four goals of misbehavior (attention, power, revenge, or inadequacy) which were discussed. Briefly review the following criteria before starting the discussion:

- a. What did the child do?
 - b. What was the purpose of the child's misbehavior?
 - c. How did you as a parent feel about the child's behavior?
 - d. What type of action did you as a parent take?
 - e. How did the child respond to the parent action?
 - f. In the child's mind was she/he *acting or reacting*?
- After you have reviewed the criteria ask one of the following questions:

- a. Is there anyone who would like to share with the group his/her experience at identifying misbehavior?
- b. Did anyone experience one or a combination of the four goals of misbehavior in the parent-child relationship this week? If so how did she/he go about handling the situation?
- c. (_____) (person's name in the group), would you mind sharing your experience on identifying a child's misbehavior with us?

In addition to reviewing the At-Home Activity you might wish to review how the parents are using all of the parenting skills they have learned to date. You might start out by asking one of the questions found below:

- a. What specific skills that you've learned during the past weeks have you found helpful in your parenting?
- b. How has responsive listening worked for you? How hasn't it?
- c. How has rational self-counseling been useful to you?

Add to the list some of your own questions. (Remember to be ready to do some responsive listening and clarification. Be a positive model. By doing responsive listening a) you'll find out how each participant is doing with learning the parenting skills, and b) some questions will be developed by the participants.)

2. Discussion of Assigned Reading

The reading assigned for this session was "Discipline and Punishment: Is There a Difference?" Bulletin #8 in the PEP Series. Use one or more of the following

questions to get the discussion started. If you like, develop your own questions.

3 Discussion Questions—

- a. What are some important points stressed in the bulletin?
- b. How can you apply what you read and studied?
- c. Does anyone have a question about what he or she read?
- d. What does discipline mean, and how does it differ from punishment?
- e. What can happen if you punish a child?
- f. What are some important points to keep in mind when you discipline?
- g. What is meant by the word *consistency* in parenting?

4. Exercise I. How Would You Handle It . . . ?

Following are some typical parent/child situations. Read the situations out loud to the participants. Ask each participant to write down on a piece of paper how he or she would handle this situation. Then exchange papers and have participants read aloud the answers. Discussion of answers should be encouraged to see the wide differences of handling each situation.

Situation

- a. Your three-year-old child continues to play in the street.
- b. Your ten-year-old son has just broken your favorite vase.
- c. Your 12-year-old daughter has just scratched the keyboard on your new organ.
- d. Your 18-year-old son has just mashed the fender of your car.
- e. Your spouse has just punished your child. You know that it is wrong. What do you do?

5. **Summary.** Summarization is very important to the total learning process of both the facilitator and the participants. It allows each person to identify and clarify in her/his mind points on which she/he is either not clear or still a little fuzzy about. It helps you to identify how far along the group has come in understanding and implementing the new skills. The questions you might ask are:

- a. What were some of the important things you learned from this session? (You may want to put these on the blackboard.)
- b. How can you use these ideas in your own parent-child situations?

6. **At-Home Activity.** For the next session, ask participants to concentrate on using discipline in the parent/child relationships. Ask them to observe what happens in the child and to analyze both the child's behavior and their own. Inform them that time will be given at the next session for discussion of their experience.

7. Reminder to Participants

- a. Encourage any positive behavior exhibited by your child during the week. Make sure you tell the child so—preferably with a responsive-I-message.
- b. Examine PEP Tips to Ponder for aid in practicing and implementing these skills at home.
- c. Do “My Blueprint for Improving the Parent/Child Relationship.”

8. **Assigned Reading.** Ask participants to read “Strengthening the Family through the Family Council,” Bulletin #9 of the PEP Series, before the next session. Emphasize this reading will acquaint them with a procedure for establishing regularly scheduled meetings to discuss the business of the family in a mutually conclusive environment for all.

Notes

Session 9

Topic. *Strengthening the Family Through the Family Council*

Objectives.

- 1 To help parents understand the concept, process, and dynamics of the Family Council.
- 2 To help parents learn how to initiate and conduct effective Family Council meetings with their children.
- 3 To strengthen a parent's role within the family by learning to hold regularly scheduled Family Council meetings.
- 4 To review all the parenting skills that have been learned in the parent education program.
5. To say good-bye.

Materials:

1. **Discussion of At-Home Activity.** Discuss with the group the At-Home Activity from Session #8. Parents were asked to concentrate on using discipline in the parent-child relationship and to observe what happens in the child and then to analyze both the child's behavior and their own. Ask who would like to share his or her experiences. Encourage and reinforce any positive behavior expressed or demonstrated.

2. **Discussion of Assigned Reading**

The reading assigned for this session was "Strengthening the Family Through the Family Council," Bulletin #9 in the PEP Series. Use one or more of the following questions to get the discussion started. Also, if you like, you may want to develop your own questions.

Discussion Questions

- a. What are some important points stressed in the bulletin?
 - b How can you apply what you read and studied?
 - c. Does anyone have a question about what he or she read?
 - d. What is the definition of a family council meeting?
 - e. Why is a family council meeting so important to the family, to parent(s), to the children?
 - f. Why is it important to hold regularly scheduled family council meetings instead of holding emergency or spur-of-the-moment meetings?
 - g. Who should lead family council meetings?
 - h. When and who should start family council meetings?
 - i. What happens if some member of your family doesn't want to start family council meetings?
 - j. What can be done if some family member disrupts a family council meeting?
 - h. What are a few common mistakes that might be made at a family council meeting?
 - l. What are some general rules for governing a family council meeting?
3. **Situation** Have participants role play the exercise found in their reading material. After you have role played, use the questions found at the end to discuss what has happened.
 4. **Summary** Summarization is very important to the total learning process of both you and the participants. It

allows each person to identify and clarify points which are not clear. It helps you to identify especially how far along the group has come in understanding and implementing the new skills. The questions you might ask are:

- a. What were some of the important things you learned from this session? (You may want to put these on the chalkboard.)
- b. How can you use these ideas in your own parent-child situations?

5 **Bringing PEP to a Conclusion—the Final Session**

As a facilitator of the PEP program you may want participants to identify what important ideas, concepts, skills, etc. they learned from being in the program. In addition you may want to ask them if PEP has altered their parenting attitudes and behaviors in any way and, if so, would they mind sharing this with the group. Encourage parents to review the materials from time to time and to continue using the PEP Tips to Ponder. If you like, you might want parents to evaluate their experience in the PEP program. (See form for evaluation in Leader's Manual.)

Excercise I. Good-by

When people who have been working together will be separating, either to form other groups or to go their separate ways, the fact of separation may be acknowledged. This may be done by asking each person to say "good-bye" to whomever they want to, in whatever way they choose.

Congratulations on your most successful parenting experience.

A Public Relations Kit

A. Sample Letter To A Potential Co-Sponsor

Dear _____:

The County Extension Service has for some time been concerned about helping parents develop their potential as parents and substitute parents and also about the lack of adequate educational programs to help parents become responsible. Most parents experience anxiety and uncertainty at times about their ability to raise and guide children, and some of them do indeed lack parental competence.

To fill this need, we would like to organize a series of classes on parent education. Would you be willing to join with us in co-sponsoring such a project?

What we have in mind is a series of study/discussion classes dealing with such topics as responsibility, coping, communication, discipline and encouragement. As resource material we will be using the Practical Education for Parenting bulletins developed by our Family Life Specialist.

The specific type of help we would like from your agency would be in one or all of the areas below:

- co-sponsoring a group*
- co-leading a group*
- advertising*
- referral*

Your agency's cooperation in this project would be an important contribution to health and welfare of the families in our community, and we sincerely hope that you will be able to give us an affirmative answer.

Sincerely,

B. Sample Letters to Parents or Interested Persons

1. *Letter of invitation, mimeographed on letterhead of one of the sponsoring agencies, with flier and response card (see next page) enclosed:*

Dear Parent:

In (month or months), the (agency) and the (agency) will present a study/discussion series on parenting which we believe will be interesting, informative, and provocative, and most of all a benefit to you. The program is called Practical Education For Parenting.

There will be (# of sessions), on (dates), all to be held at (place) from (time) each time. Highlights of these classes will be:

(Title of the bulletin used. Please list).

The PEP program has been designed for today's parents (couples, single parents, grandparents, foster parents) who are interested in finding effective ways to develop more positive and satisfying parent-child relationships. PEP participants are helped toward realizing the goal parents want most: to raise responsible children who will grow into responsible men and women, capable of living meaningful, happy adult lives.

If you would like to attend these classes, please fill out the enclosed postcard and drop it in the mail. Jot down in the space provided any subjects not listed above which you would like to have discussed. If you have any questions please call (name and number of sponsoring agency and specific name of person to ask for at that number).

We look forward to seeing you at our first class on (date), (time), at (place).

Sincerely,

2. **Return postcard**, to be enclosed with letter of invitation:

_____ (Names of Co-sponsoring Agencies)

_____ Yes, I will attend the Practical Education for Parenting Programs.

_____ Yes, I plan to bring _____ with me.

_____ How many children do you have? _____
Ages _____

_____ Sorry, I cannot attend, but would be interested in attending if the classes were offered again.

Special topics I would like to have covered:

Name(s):

Address:

(The face of the postcard should carry the name and business address of the person in charge of enrollment).

C. **Sample Publicity Items**

1. **Program.** Once you have lined up your co-sponsor and the place where the program will be held, you may wish to publicize the program by flier, news releases or articles, posters, radio/TV announcements, etc. See examples that follow. A word of advice when making fliers or posters: make sure they are **vivid and eye catching**.

Practical Education for Parenting

Sponsored by _____

Parents, grandparents, foster parents and the like — do you have problems and concerns about the following.

- Getting your child up
- Getting your child dressed
- Eating, cleanliness, bedtime
- Home-school relationships
- Just general coping with being a parent

Are these common problems and concerns to you? Do you think all parents have these problems/concerns? It may surprise you—not all parents do. Many parents have learned to solve problems just like these and have learned to view their children differently.

What
Is
PEP?

PEP is a (number of weeks) study/discussion program which encourages the development of parenting skills that foster mutual respect, cooperation, responsibility, and self-reliance in the parent-child relationship. The program demonstrates how to be a responsible parent, rather than a “good” parent — how to be **open** in response rather than closed — how to use **encouragement** and **natural** and **logical consequences** as an alternative to reward and punishment — how to foster **mutual** respect, cooperation, and responsibility and self-reliance.

Who Is
The
Program
For?

PEP is for today’s parents (couples, single parents, grandparents, foster parents) who are interested in finding effective ways to develop more positive and satisfying parent-child relationships. PEP participants are helped toward realizing the goal parents want most: to raise responsible children who grow into responsible men and women, capable of living meaningful, happy adult lives.

When,
Where,
Time

(Place)
(Dates)
(Time)

For More
Information
Contact

(Name, business address, and phone number of person in charge of enrollment)

- PEP #3 Learning to use encouragement instead of praise to build your child's confidence and feelings of self-worth.
- PEP #4 Improving communication by becoming an effective listener
- PEP #5. Communicating your ideas and feelings to children, helping your children to explore alternative ways of behaving
- PEP #6. Replacing reward-and-punishment with learning-from-consequences
- PEP #7. Applying natural and logical consequences to the challenges of child-training; acting positively rather than reacting negatively.
- PEP #8. Establishing family meetings that encourage democratic family relationships.
- PEP #9. Developing confidence and growing as a person as well as becoming a more effective parent.



Practical Education for Parenting



Cooperative Extension Service
The Ohio State University

*For couples, one parent,
single parents and foster parents*

Father Knows Best

The good old days were when dad was boss, and mom and the children knew their place. Life seemed more simple, and people knew what was expected of them — at least peace surrounded the household. But times have changed, and people have changed, and parents are changing. Relationships between men and women, minorities and whites, and most of all, children and adults have changed. Today's parent is often bewildered and sometimes confused by all these social changes and their effect on family relationships.

Today's parents are ever-searching for ways of relating to their children. This searching has led to the development of PEP, a study%discussion program of Practical Education for Parenting. It is a realistic and sensible approach to parent-child relationships based on democratic principles of human relationships.

The Parent Today

The PEP program has been designed for today's parents (couples, single parents, grandparents, foster parents and the like) who want to find effective ways to develop more positive and satisfying parent-child relationships. PEP has accepted the rewarding challenge of creating an effective parent-child relationship that can grow and grow in an atmosphere of love, understanding, cooperation, and mutual respect.

Parents working together in small study%discussion groups become actively involved in sharing common parenting concerns and experiences. They can identify with typical responses to family problems and then deal more effectively with them through alternative approaches, discussing weekly reading and homework assignments, and learning and practicing specific parenting principles and techniques. Parents finally learn that they, too, have rights as well as responsibilities, that it is the responsible parent who uses the home and family as a learning laboratory where each person is free to succeed and fail without danger.

PEP parents are kind but firm. They provide opportunities for children to make decisions within limits and to be accountable for these decisions. PEP parents give encouragement freely and show confidence in their children's ability to handle tasks without undue concern and over-supervision. They help their children develop the courage to be imperfect in a society that holds unrealistic goals for its members.

It's Up To You!

PEP parents are helped toward realizing the goal all parents want most: to raise responsible children who grow into responsible men and women, capable of achieving and living in a meaningful relationship with other members of society.

Being able to learn more effective ways of raising children takes courage, time, practice and patience.

- **COURAGE** to be open and to accept new ideas and attitudes that at first will seem strange.
- **TIME** to grow in acceptance of those new ideas and attitudes on parent-child relationships.
- **PRACTICE** in applying the principles and skills at home with your own family.
- **PATIENCE** for the time it takes to master these new parent-child skills.

In our modern society we have come to expect "a miracle overnight." There is no magic wand to be waved, no pill to be taken to insure success. PEP, like anything else of real value, takes time plus patience plus practice to equal progress. It's up to you. Begin:

- PEP #1. Understanding your child's behavior and misbehavior.
- PEP #2. Understanding more about your child's emotions and yourself as a parent, recognizing the differences between "good" parents and responsible parents.

D. News Release

(Letterhead of Sponsoring Organization)

contact: Names and telephone
Numbers of people
who can supply
further information. TION.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OR

FOR RELEASE ON (Date) and
(Thereafter)

The (agency) and the (agency) are co-sponsoring a series of (number of study/discussion) classes to be held from (hour) to (hour) on (list all dates) at (place).

Highlights of the study/discussion classes will include (list titles of bulletins that you are using). There will be time for ample discussion by all participants.

Further information can be obtained from (name of enrollment person, his or her organization, address and telephone number.)

E. Evaluating The Study/Discussion Course

Was it all worth while? You will want to find out for your own satisfaction what, if anything, you achieved, and you will want pointers to guide you in planning future PEP courses should you decide to repeat the series.

Allow ten minutes or so at the end of the last class for members to fill out an evaluation form. If any members are absent, mail copies of the form to them (enclose a stamped, addressed return envelope).

The sample evaluation form below will provide a springboard for your own ideas. You may prefer to drop or change certain questions, and add others.

Practical Education For Parenting Evaluation Questionnaire

The [sponsoring agency(ies)] would appreciate your answers to the following questions. Your comments will help improve our future classes.

1. In general, how would you describe the classes?
2. You had expectations of how these classes could help you. Were your expectations fulfilled? How? If not, why not?
3. Which of the topics did you consider most valuable?
4. Which of the topics did you consider least valuable?
5. Were any topics which you would have liked to learn more about not covered? If so, what were they?
6. Do you feel these classes have value for prospective parents?
Yes_____ No_____
7. Do you feel more confident about your ability to give your child responsible parenting than you did before the classes?
Yes_____ No_____
8. What do you think of the general organization of the classes
(length, use of time, facilities, etc.)?

9. Please give your rating for the classes as a whole:

_____Excellent	_____Good
_____Average	_____Poor

The responses to questions 3, 4, 6, 7 and 9 can be tabulated numerically and also as percentages of the total number of class members. Answers to all three questions dealing with specific topics can be compared with the notes taken on the initial audience discussion of major concerns in coming to the study/discussion course. Include a summary of these and other individual responses, along with the numerical tabulations, in your report to the planning committee and quote directly a few of the most interesting comments.

Resources For Parent Education

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CONTRACT FOR PEP STUDY/DISCUSSION GROUPS

- I understand that the facilitator of my study/discussion group is not and does not pretend to be an expert or authority in parent-child relations. The facilitator's job is to hand out assignments, call meetings to order at the specified time, encourage free and open discussion of principles studied, keep meetings moving by focusing attention on the topic being considered, invite all members to participate in the discussion, and close meetings at the agreed time. The facilitator, even though he or she may have been through a study/discussion program, should not be looked to by members for counseling on problems they may have with their children.*
- I understand that this is my study/discussion group, that there is no expert present to give us all the answers. It will be stimulating, enjoyable and informative exactly in proportion to the interest, dedication and energy I contribute to it.*
- I understand that the expert in the group is the material that I read for each study/discussion group meeting. Therefore, when I or anyone in the group do not understand an idea, concept or theory we should reread the material first, and seek additional clarification by asking others what they believe and also seek outside resources.*
- I understand that the group facilitator will be looked upon as the guide for the flow of discussion, but I also understand members have equal responsibility for getting out of the program what they want. If one or two members engage in a struggle, argue, insist on dwelling on one of their own pet theories, then it's up to me to speak up and take the pressure off the facilitator.*
- I understand I am not expected to agree with or accept all of the ideas presented to me in this study/discussion program. What I accept or reject is up to me. When I find a point that I disagree with or do not understand, I will note it and bring it up at the next session. If, after short discussion, I am still not in agreement or unclear, I will postpone final judgment until later, and permit discussion to move on without arguing my point. I am participating to learn new ideas, not to dispute them.*
- I understand that assignments must be read in advance of meetings. This not only is essential if I am to get the most out of the program, it also is simple courtesy to other members who depend on me to know something about the subject to be covered. (If I expect my children to do their homework, then I have exactly the same obligation with my homework.)*
- I understand that punctual and regular attendance at study/discussion meetings is very important to my success in this program and that it is not fair to other members if I arrive late to some meetings and altogether miss others. Doing this breaks group continuity.*
- I understand that after several meetings, parents in study/discussion groups often become quite open in discussing problems in their own families. They grow trusting of the other group members, and expect fellow members not to divulge to others outside the group anything that is said in the group that is of a personal or confidential nature. I agree to honor this trust by not telling people outside the group anything.*
- I understand that I will be mistaken if I expect miracles or instant changes in relations with my children. When I learn a method new to me, I agree not to rush right home and try it, or seek to use it as just another gimmick for dominating my children. I will want to understand it before plunging in. I also will refrain from making a pest of myself by trying to counsel other parents on how they should go about raising their children. If my spouse does not accept ideas I have learned, I will resist trying to convert him or her through argument. Successful demonstration is the most convincing and effective form of persuasion.*

Date _____

Signed _____

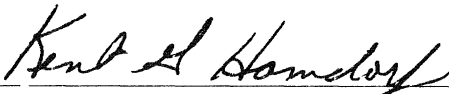
Certificate of Participation
College of Agriculture and Home Economics
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Issued this _____ day of _____, 19____.

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Extension Specialist
Human Relations & Family Development




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